Images

Images are powerful tools for communicating connections, highlighting key points, and representing complex concepts. These essential elements of course content must be made accessible so that all learners can benefit from them.

To that end, every image used in your course must be tagged with a short descriptive phrase called Alt Text. This enables learners who use screen readers to understand what is displayed in the image. For complex images, use the Blackboard item description field to explain both the content and purpose of the non-text content. Provide detailed descriptions for particularly important elements that may become relevant for future coursework.

When you point out the key elements of your non-text content, all learners are able to focus on the point you’re trying to make rather than being distracted or pulled off-course.

How To

Write Alt Text

Alt Text needs to be descriptive, but it also needs to be brief. The text should not be written in full sentences or paragraphs. Limit Alt Text to about 125 characters, providing enough detail for learners to understand the content of the image.

- Too short: Alt = 2 rabbits
- Too long: Alt = grey rabbit on the left and white rabbit with red eyes on right lying in grass with yellow flowers around them
- Just right: Alt = grey rabbit and white rabbit lying in the grass
Add Alt Text

Microsoft products
1. Right-click on the image
2. Select Format Picture from the dropdown menu
3. Choose Alt Text
4. Enter information in the Description field

Blackboard
1. Click Build Content > Image
2. Complete all fields including Alt Text
3. Click Submit

Write Item Descriptions

Item descriptions should be 2-4 sentences long and can be written in full sentences or paragraphs. Provide enough detail for learners to understand each element of the image, focusing on the elements that are most relevant to the course.

- Too short: A pie chart containing the six principles of connected learning.
- Too long: This image contains a dark blue background with the title "Six Principles of Connected Learning" written across the top of the page in a large white font. The caption is below the title in a smaller white font and reads: Connected learning isn't a burden that one organization shoulders on its own, and is about building connections across different sites of learning. A multicolored pie chart with six segments is located in the center of the page. Each segment contains a logo that represents a principle of connected learning: interest powered (represented by a camera), academically oriented (represented by a graduation cap), production centered (represented by a fountain pen tip), peer-supported (represented by three human figures standing close to one another), shared purpose (represented by a speech bubble), and openly networked (represented by the outline of a human head with a globe behind it). A light blue number 6 sits in the center of the image.
- Just right: A pie chart with six segments, each representing a principle of connected learning: interest powered, academically oriented, production centered, peer-supported, shared purpose, openly networked. The caption reads: Connected learning isn't a burden that one organization shoulders on its own, and is about building connections across different sites of learning.
Add Item Descriptions

Blackboard

- Click Build Content > Image
- Complete all fields including Alt Text and Long Description
- Click Submit